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INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA-UAW

ELIZABETH BUNN, Secretary-Treasurer

February 23, 2010

To: Senator Prague, Rep. Ryan and Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee

From: Robert Madore, Director
Beverley Brakeman, Community Action Program Representative

Re: SB 61 AN ACT REMOVING THE REQUIREMENT OF EMPLOYER OR INSURER PREAPPROVAL FOR THE PROVISION OF CERTAIN MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND TREATMENT TO INJURED WORKERS.

My name is Beverley Brakeman and I am here on behalf of our Director Robert Madore to urge your support of SB 61.

This bill will reduce the delay in medical treatment of workers who have had their claims accepted by the employer and remove the requirement for pre-approval by the employer or insurer for routine medical examinations and treatment for said workers.

This bill is good for injured workers because:

- It reduces delays in obtaining medical treatment recommended by treating physicians;
- Injured workers would not have to wait for an insurer to pre-approve diagnostic tests requested by their treating physician – this means quicker diagnosis, more immediate treatment and better chances for a successful recovery;
- Insurers can no longer arbitrarily interrupt or deny treatment recommended by a worker's doctor;
- Injured worker's treatment will not be interrupted while they are waiting for a hearing to reinstate that treatment;
- It requires insurers to support denials with competent medical evidence and a commissioner must approve any discontinuation of authorized medical treatment.
- Injured workers will get back to work more quickly if they get healed properly;

This bill is good for employers because:

- Injured workers get back to work quicker AFTER they have been healed properly allowing for better re-acclimation after treatment;
- They will get timely medical treatment for their injured employees which is what they pay their insurers for;
- It does not change their right to contest denied claims

SB #61 is good for the Workers' Compensation Commission because:

- It uses existing procedures while having no fiscal impact and making the Commission more efficient and effective;
- It gives commissioners more authority to authorize routine and non-invasive treatments at informal hearings, the ability to review entire cases and make decisions concerning disputed treatment and improves their ability to put treatment into the hands of physicians.

Thank you.

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